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فتاوى صراط مستقيم

FATAWA

Sirat-e-Mustaqeem

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with the help of various scholars.

His ambitions were very high and he wished to achieve many goals for the betterment of Muslims in the UK. Sadly, on 10 October 1988, during a journey back home on the M6 Motorway, all his ambitions and desires collapsed, when he, along with his son and mother-in-law, died in a major car accident. His funeral was itself a proof of his popularity among the Muslim community. His funeral service was historical and unique in the UK, attended by thousands of Muslims from all over the UK and from various organisations and groups. He was buried at a cemetery in Birmingham, and left behind his widow and two sons.

May Allah accept all his efforts and services and may Allah forgive him and grant him Paradise. Aameen.

CONTENTS

Foreword	05
Late Maulana Mahmood Ahmed Mirpuri	07
Chapter 1: FAITH AND PRACTICE	
Faith and Practice	21
Age of accountability to Allah	29
What is <i>Shirk</i> ?	30
Presenting Oblation (Nadhr-o-Niyaz)	33
Seeking an Intermediary - Middle Man.....	35
<i>Waseelah</i> in <i>Du'a</i>	38
Blessings from the grave of Imam Bukhari.....	44
Entitlement to Sifaarish/ <i>Shafa'at</i>	46
Is Ali (ؑ) able to solve our problems?.....	48
Spiritual Guide or Saint.....	50
The <i>Auliya</i> ' - Do they die?	53
Seeking help from relatives	55
What if a Prayer mat gets wet with alcohol?	55
Chapter :2 RISALAT (Prophethood)	
The first creation of Allah	57
<i>Noor</i> (light) and <i>Bashar</i> (humans)	59
Kissing your thumbs.....	62
Splitting of the moon.....	65
The Prophet's (ؐ) funeral.....	66
Saying ' <i>Ya Muhammad</i> '	68
Obedience to the Prophet (ؐ).....	69
The Prophet's (ؐ) children.....	72
Drinking the blood of the Prophet (ؐ)	73
Did any female come as a Prophet?	74
Is Khidr (ؑ) alive?	76
Isa's (ؑ) return to the earth	77
Chapter 3: WUDU (Ablution)	
<i>Wudu</i> and Smoking	78
<i>Wudu</i> with used water	78

<i>Wudu</i> with nail polish on.....	79
Artificial teeth and <i>Wudu</i>	81
Reading <i>Salat-wa-Salam</i> during <i>Wudu</i>	81
Wearing clothes after a wet dream	81
Standing up while urinating	82

Chapter 4: MASH (Wiping over socks)

Wiping over socks in <i>Wudu</i>	83
Time limit of <i>Mash</i>	87
Wiping over a wig	88

Chapter 5: TAYAMMUM (Wudu without water)

<i>Tayammum</i> in prison	89
<i>Tayammum</i> in impurity	89

Chapter 6: THE MOSQUE

Building a mosque with interest money	91
Insurance of a mosque	91
Donations from mixed sources of income.....	92
Bank loans for a mosque	94
Non-Muslim government grants for a mosque.....	95
Minarets of a mosque	95
Announcing lost property in a mosque.....	96
Sleeping in the mosque	98
What is Masjid Dirar?	99
Money from illegal drugs	102
Employing a junior <i>Imam</i>	102
One prayer equal to 70,000	103
Income from video films, etc	103

Chapter 7: PRAYER

Can a wife pray alongside her husband?	105
Can women pray in the mosque?	105
Praying with a tie on.....	106
Funerals prayer behind a Shiite <i>Imam</i>	107
Attractive designs on prayer mats	109
Pictures of mosques on prayer mats	110

Praying at the earliest time	111
<i>Maghrib</i> and ' <i>Ishâ</i> prayers	112
Praying in short sleeve shirts.....	113
Placing of hands during prayer.....	113
<i>Qadâ</i> Prayer.....	114
<i>Sajdatus-Sahw</i>	115
<i>Sunnah Mu'akkadah</i>	118
<i>Sunnah Ghair Mu'akkadah</i>	121
Standing in congregation.....	122
Prayer of thanks	125
<i>Istikharah</i> prayer	126
<i>Tahiyyatul-Masjid</i>	127
Praying on behalf of the dead	127
Doing ' <i>Dhikr</i> ' aloud	128
Calling for prayer	131
Difference in prayer of men and women	132
<i>Du'â</i> in <i>Sajdah</i>	132
<i>Jalsatul Istirahah</i>	133
<i>Raf'ul-Yadain</i>	134
Reading <i>Surat Al-Fatihah</i>	135
Saying ' <i>Ameen</i> ' aloud.....	136
<i>Qada' Omri</i>	137
<i>Qada' Omri</i> in one special prayer.....	141
Death of one who did not pray at all	141
Praying in journey (<i>Qasr</i> prayer).....	142
<i>Witr</i> prayer.....	143
When did the Prophet (ﷺ) pray <i>Witr</i> ?	145
Praying one <i>Witr</i>	146
<i>Du'â</i> of <i>Sajdah</i>	147

Chapter 8: FRIDAY PRAYER

<i>Adhan</i> for <i>Jumu'ah</i> prayer.....	148
Friday prayer in a pub.....	148
Four <i>Fard</i> after <i>Jumu'ah</i> prayer	149

Developments through unlawful sources	279
Why is pork <i>Haram</i> ?	281
When can we eat pork?	282
Trade of <i>Haram</i> things	282
Chicken that eat <i>Haram</i> food	283
Stunning animals before slaughter	284
Alcohol and Interest	284
Interest to help the needy.....	287
House Mortgages.....	287
Lottery in Islamic <i>Shari'ah</i>	288
Life Insurance	289

Chapter 25: SECTS IN ISLAM

Following particular sects	290
Voting for secular groups	292
Who are 'Isma'eelis'?	292
Division into sects	293
Groups distorting Islam	294
Religious and Political organisations	294

Chapter 26: GENERAL ISSUES

Abortion	297
Use of contraceptives	301
Test tube babies	302
Buying and selling shares.....	302
Demonstrations.....	303
Kidney transplants.....	303
Blood donors	304
Imprison or cut-off hands?	305
Publicity of non-Muslim	305
Is the 14th Century the last?	306
Trade of Statues.....	307
Calling a non-Muslim ' <i>Kâfir</i> '	307
Creatures in Water.....	308

Authority to declare <i>Haram</i> and <i>Halal</i>	308
Contacts with unpracticing relatives	309
Sensual desires	310
' <i>Assalamu-Alaikum</i> ' or just ' <i>Salam</i> '	311
Punishment in this world	311
Right of pre-emption (<i>Shuf'ah</i>)	313
Breaking an oath.....	314
Left-over food.....	314
Food cooked by Hindus.....	315
Greeting non-Muslims.....	315
The Dream of Sheikh Ahmed.....	316

Chapter 1

FAITH & PRACTICE

To the Chief Editor of Sirat-e-Mustaqeem. Please answer the following questions according to the Qur'ân and *Hadîth*.

Is practicing Islam part of *Imân* (faith)?

Does a Muslim become a disbeliever if he doesn't practice Islam?

Nazir Ahmed Saghir, Birmingham

Answer:

The matter of belief and disbelief and to say whether a someone is a Muslim or not, is a very serious issue and we need to be very careful in such matters. The definition of *Imân*, Practice and Sin are all important issues and if one discusses these without enough knowledge, he may become confused. I will try to answer your question in brief so that everyone can understand and benefit.

With regard to these issues, various opinions are held by different groups of people. These opinions are as follows:

Opinion 1 A person declaring *Shahadatain* (Accepting Islam) cannot be called a *Kafir* in any way.

Opinion 2 A person who declares *Shahadatain* and then commits a major sin, he will become a non-Muslim.

Opinion 3 A person who declares *Shahadatain* and commits a major sin, though he will be considered out of Islam, we cannot call him a *Kafir*. However he will be in between Islam and *Kufr*.

Opinion 4 After declaration of *Shahadatain*, if one denies the general practices of Islam and ignores the prohibitions in Islam, he will become a disbeliever /non-Muslim.

Opinion 5 If one commits a sin which *Shari'ah* considers as

Kufr, he will be considered a non-Muslim.

Opinion 6 If a believer does not practice according to Islam he will enter the Hell fire, but because he had some faith and did not commit *Shirk* in his life, he will enter Paradise, after being punished in the Hell-fire.

Before I discuss and analyse these various opinions, I would first like to explain what *Imân* is.

The Holy Qur'ân repeatedly mentions *Imân* with 'Amal (Faith and Actions). As *Surat Al-Kahf* states:

﴿إِنَّ الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ كَانَتْ لَهُمْ جَنَّاتُ الْفِرْدَوْسِ نُزُلًا﴾ [١٠٧: ١٨]

“As to those who believe and do righteous deeds, they have the Gardens of Paradise for their entertainment.” (18:107)

Many *Ahâdîth* also mention actions with belief. A famous *Hadîth* about the Pillars of Islam, mentioned in Bukhari and other *Hadîth* books says:

«بُنِيَ الْإِسْلَامُ عَلَى خَمْسٍ: شَهَادَةِ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَأَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا رَسُولُ اللَّهِ، وَإِقَامَ الصَّلَاةِ، وَإِيتَاءَ الزَّكَاةِ، وَالْحَجِّ وَصَوْمِ رَمَضَانَ».

"Islam is based on 5 pillars:

1. To testify that *La ilaha illallâh wa anna Muhammadar Rasulullâh* (None has the right to be worshipped but Allâh and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allâh)
2. To offer prayers,
3. To pay *Zakat*,
4. To perform *Hajj*,
5. To observe *Saum* (Fast)."

The latter four relate to practical Islam (actions).

These proofs give a clear indication that there is a strong link between belief and practice. So, we can say that *Imân* can be divided into two parts: 1) to believe, 2) and to act according to Islam.

A definition by scholars says: "*Imân* is to seriously believe, to pronounce it and to act with parts of your body."

Some say that *Imân* is only serious belief and others say that *Imân* is just to pronounce it. But both these definitions are incomplete and incorrect.

According to the first explanation, we have two opinions for the definition of *Imân*:

1) Practice is part of *Imân* - if someone does not practice, his *Imân* will not be considered.

2) Practice is only necessary to complete *Imân* - this means that without practice we can consider one's *Imân*, but it will be incomplete.

We cannot tell what someone has in their heart, only Allâh is the All-Knower. Therefore, if someones declare that they are Muslims, we have to accept and deal with them as Muslims. Though at times, we can justify one's *Imân* from their practice. We shall discuss this in detail at a later stage.

When we call someone a Muslim, it will be because of his declaration. Likewise, calling someone a disbeliever is also because of his declaration or him not pronouncing *Shahadatain*.

With some deeds in Islam, it has been mentioned that if one does not practice them, one will be called a *Kafir*. This *Kufr* however, will not be in the sense of one being completely non-Muslim, but means that his *Imân* will be incomplete.

In conclusion, practice is part of *Imân* and a condition for the completion of one's *Imân*.

If someone declares *Imân* and does not practice according to Islam, completely or partially, to what extent will he be a Muslim

or *Kafir*? We shall discuss this in detail, with reference to the opinions given above.

First Opinion:

After declaring *Shahadatain*, one will be considered a Muslim regardless of practice or not. This opinion is not right because at the time of the Prophet (ﷺ) there were hypocrites who declared *Shahadatain* but they were mentioned as disbelievers. Everyone agrees that if someone denies the prohibitions of Islam and rejects the obligatory deeds, he becomes a disbeliever. It doesn't matter how strongly he declares otherwise. Therefore, the first opinion is considered incorrect.

Second Opinion:

According to the second opinion, if someone commits a major sin after declaring *Shahadatain* he will be considered a *Kafir*. Those who hold this opinion attempt to prove it from the Qur'ân and *Hadîth*. As in *Surat Al-Mâ'idah* Allâh says:

﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ [٥ : ٤٤]

“If any do fail to judge by what Allâh has revealed, they are disbelievers.” (5:44)

The Prophet (ﷺ) has said:

«سِبَابُ الْمُسْلِمِ فُسُوقٌ وَقِتَالُهُ كُفْرٌ»

“Abusing a Muslim is an evil doing and to fight him is *Kufr*”.

The Prophet (ﷺ) also said:

“If someone calls another Muslim a *Kafir*, then one of them will be a *Kafir*.”

This verse and *Ahâdîth* show that if a major sin is committed, the person becomes a disbeliever. But, we do not generally accept this opinion to be correct because we cannot declare someone to be a *Kafir*. We can only use the word '*Kufr*', as this word may be used in different contexts. According to this opinion, if we

consider such a person as *Kafir*, he automatically becomes a *Murtad* (Apostate- someone who abandons the religion) and the punishment for a *Murtad* is that he is to be killed.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“He who misses one prayer becomes a *Kafir*.”

Scholars have agreed that this *Kufr* is not in the sense that he becomes a disbeliever, but only that his act resembles a *Kafir* and if one continues this habit, then he will become a *Kafir*.

Third Opinion:

This opinion states that after committing a major sin one is considered to be out of Islam but is not completely a *Kafir*, because he has accepted Islam. However, he will remain in the Hell-fire. This opinion is also incorrect because if one declares himself to be a Muslim, then how can he remain in Hell fire forever?

Fourth Opinion:

This opinion says that after the declaration of *Shahadatain*, if one ignores obligatory duties and does not bother about *Halâl* or *Harâm* (lawful & unlawful), he will certainly be a disbeliever. This is a valid opinion.

Fifth Opinion:

We can declare someone a *Kafir* in that act only if he commits a sin which in Islamic *Shari'ah* is considered as '*Kufr*'. As in *Surat Al-Mâ'idah* Allâh says:

﴿وَمَنْ لَّمْ يَحْكَمْ بِمَا أَنزَلَ اللَّهُ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْكَافِرُونَ﴾ [٥ : ٤٤]

“If any do fail to judge by what Allâh has revealed, they are disbelievers.” (5:44)

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

«بَيْنَ الْمُسْلِمِ وَبَيْنَ الْكُفْرِ تَرْكُ الصَّلَاةِ».

“The difference between a Muslim and a non-Muslim is